

9 February 1977

NOTE TO FILE:

Henceforth DIA representatives will be instructed during final drafting sessions to determine whether or not a particular paper is especially sensitive, either for policy considerations or classification. If the paper is to be closely held, they will advise DIA to this effect and should be able to restrict distribution of the final product. In addition, if a document is particularly sensitive, even if not highly classified, the D/DCI/NI will mention this to NFIB and it will appear in the NFIB Minutes.



A/EO/DCI/NI

The dissemination of NIEs to U. S. overseas installations constitutes a particular security risk because of the proximity of these installations to hostile foreign intelligence services. It was found that, except in cases of certain especially sensitive NIEs, there is dissemination of NIEs overseas -- to U.S. Ambassadors, CIA Station Chiefs, and U.S. military commands headquartered abroad -- whenever the subject matter appears to be in any manner germane to the officials' areas of responsibility. The decision to disseminate to particular U.S. overseas installations is, in practice, left to the departments concerned. In some cases, departmental dissemination procedures involve levels of review; however, such reviews frequently result in additions, rather than deletions, to the list. To some extent, such overseas dissemination appears to be prompted by considerations not immediately related to the NSC policy-making function, and as necessary to support NSC decisions.

Recommendation No. 2:

That the USIB Principals or their designees carefully evaluate requirements for dissemination of NIEs overseas to insure that they are limited to those which are essential.

Dissemination of NIEs to foreign governments is a matter considered by USIB on a case-by-case basis, and the Committee has no recommendation concerning this subject.

expression of divergent principles and positions which must be reconciled. It is these divergent viewpoints which the mass media find of great interest. An example was the 18 June 1969 article appearing in the New York Times titled: "U. S. Intelligence Doubts Soviet First-Strike Goal." The article reported an alleged difference of opinion between the intelligence community and the Department of Defense over Soviet "first-strike" capabilities. Although the article was suspected of having been based upon NIE 11-8-68, subject: Soviet Strategic Attack Forces, an analysis of the article's contents by an ONE official suggested that the article had been based upon a draft version.

The survey found that draft NIEs are controlled at the departmental level by officials serving as focal points for the NIE input and coordination processes. A sufficient number of copies are requested to achieve the necessary internal staffing, and the draft copies are disseminated on a case by case basis consistent with the need-to-know principle.

D. Dissemination of NIEs

The USIB previously expressed concern about the apparent broad dissemination of NIEs in October 1969 and again in May 1973.

In response to the Chairman's expression of concern in 1969, CIA, NSA, and DIA significantly reduced their dissemination. Since that time, however, dissemination has again reached the pre-1969 levels.

In 1973 it was suggested that USIB Principals tailor the distribution of NIEs on a case by case basis, and DIA and State were specifically asked to reduce the number of NIE copies they normally request. DIA reports that it has reduced standard distribution from 212 SECRET and TOP SECRET NIEs to an average of 145 copies and that distribution of codeword NIEs is less than half that number. State advises that it has long considered dissemination of NIEs on a case by case basis; therefore, the number of copies it requests is not in excess of basic departmental needs.

As one basis for its examination of NIE dissemination practices, the Security Committee used two recent estimative reports: SNIE 11-4-73 (TOP SECRET codeword) and NIE 11/13/6-73 (classified SECRET). Beginning with dissemination lists provided by ONE, the Committee then proceeded to ascertain further dissemination of the reports made from the departmental levels of the Department of Defense, State, and CIA. The full dissemination of these NIEs is provided in two attachments to this report.

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Through the results of this exercise, combined with questioning of individuals involved in the NIE dissemination process, the Committee identified four conditions which influence the extent of NIE dissemination.

1. Intended to assist NSC-level policy-making officials, NIEs are also serving as an informational vehicle for officials in policy support activities below the NSC level.
2. Dissemination below the departmental level is a departmental decision.
3. Habit has led to considerable reliance upon standard dissemination list and a dissemination philosophy which tends to include rather than exclude in cases of doubt.
4. Internal departmental dissemination is influenced by internal pressure for broader dissemination.

In the opinion of the Committee, condition (1) results from a valid requirement for senior government officials and commanders below the NSC level to have access to certain national intelligence in order to accomplish their missions and functions in support of NSC decisions. Despite the fact that the NIE, by definition, is not

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intended for this purpose, the Committee feels that in the dissemination of NIEs the special needs of such officials and commanders should continue to be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, the Committee believes that the current dissemination of NIEs could be reduced considerably if the topical interests of the prospective recipients were taken more fully into consideration in each case.

In the further opinion of the Security Committee, conditions (2), (3), and (4) above must be subject to continuing review by USIB Principals to eliminate unwarranted dissemination of NIEs.

Recommendation No. 1:

That departmental needs for NIEs be considered on a case-by-case basis by the USIB Principals or their designees and that their considerations include the special needs of senior government officials and commanders below the NSC policy-making level as necessary to accomplish their missions and functions in support of NSC decisions. The NIOs will keep account of the number of NIEs issued, advising the DCI as appropriate.

(Revised 24 January 1975)